

^AiSTs'S'] [HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.] NOSCE  
TEIPSUM! 143

And yet, alas, when all our lamps are burned.  
Our bodies wasted, and our spirits spent;  
When we have all the learned volumes  
turned^ Which yield men's wits, both help  
and ornament:

What can we know ? or what can we  
discern ? When Error chokes the  
windows of the Mind ; The divers Forms  
of things, how can we learn, That have  
been, ever from our birthday, blind ?

When Reason's lamp (which, like the sun in  
sky,  
Throughout man's little world, her beams  
did spread) Is now become a Sparkle;  
which doth lie Under the ashes, half  
extinct, and dead.

How can we hope, that through the Eye  
and Ear, This dying Sparkle, in this  
cloudy place, Can re-collect these beams  
of knowledge clear, Which were infused  
in the first minds, by grace ?

So might the heir, whose father hath,  
in play, Wasted a thousand  
pounds of ancient rent; By painful  
earning of one groat a day, Hope  
to restore the patrimony spent.

The wits that dived most deep, and soared  
most high,  
Seeking man's powers, have found his  
weakness such ; " Skill comes so slow! and  
life so fast doth fly! " " We learn so little,  
and forget so much ! "

For this, the wisest of all moral men  
Said, *He knew nought, but that he nought  
did know !* And the great mocking  
Master, mocked not then, When he said,  
*Tmih was buried deep below !*

For how may we, to other's things attain,  
When none of us, his own Soul  
understands ? For which, the Devil  
mocks our curious brain, When,  
*Know thyself!* his oracle commands.